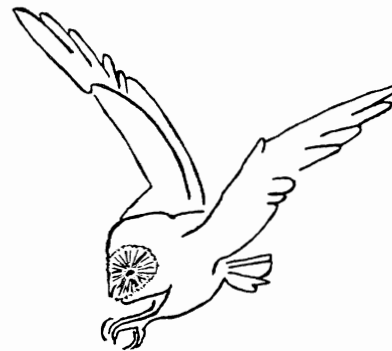


NATURALLY KENTUCKY

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
KENTUCKY STATE NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION

Number 1, August 1989



GREETINGS!

Hopefully you are aware of the Commission and our efforts in protecting the Commonwealth's rich natural heritage. We have created this newsletter to keep you, our supporters, better informed about our work and the issues in which we are involved. For those of you who are not familiar with our work, let us introduce you to the Commission and perhaps gain your support.

The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission was created in 1976 to "secure for the people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of natural areas by establishing a system of nature preserves." And what exactly is a nature preserve?

Nature preserves are small remnants of Kentucky's wilderness -- nature as it used to be. Foot trails wind through old-growth forests or past cliffs or waterfalls. Rare plants and animals, many too delicate to withstand the pressures of civilization, find refuge in them.

It is the presence of these rare and endangered plants and animals or undisturbed habitats that indicate those areas most deserving of protection. These are species like the Running Buffalo Clover (discussed on page 3), which were here long before we were -- species that coexisted in harmony with the native Americans that preceded us.

Dedication as a state nature preserve, which can occur by acquisition or in some cases with the owner retaining title, is the strongest protection for land in Kentucky. Acquisition funds are very limited. There is no state appropriation for natural areas acquisition; the only money available is from the Nongame Wildlife/Natural Areas Fund, the state income tax checkoff. This has never provided adequate funding, and donations to this fund are dwindling.

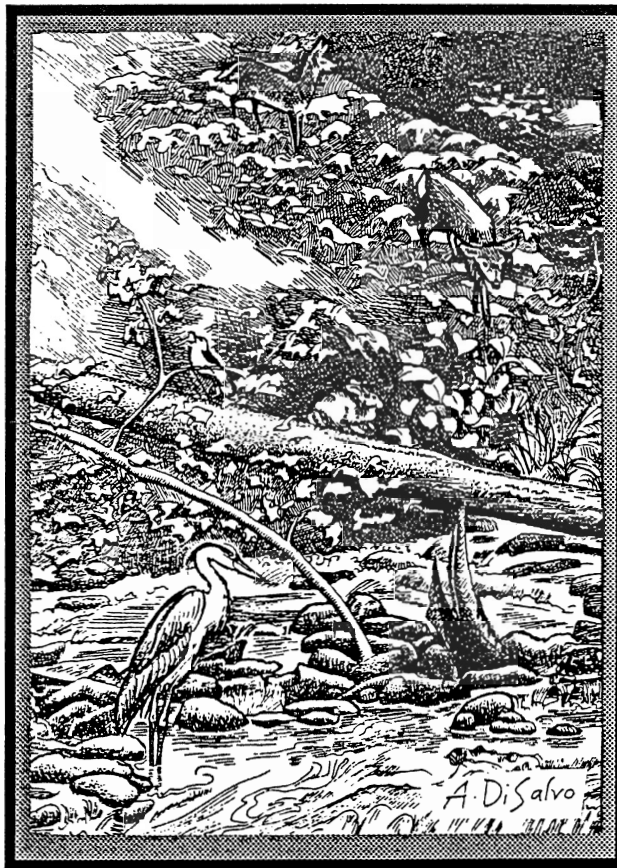
Another protection option is the Natural Areas Registry, a joint program between the Commission and The Nature Conservancy. This and other protection options will be discussed in future issues.

VOLUNTEERS ARE VITAL!

Once a natural area has been dedicated as a nature preserve, protection has just begun. Now we must protect our investment. This is the job of our stewardship coordinator, Joyce Bender, who must provide access for visitors without compromising the integrity of the natural area.

Providing adequate stewardship to 5,812 acres of natural areas is a task too large for one person (even for Joyce!). That's why volunteers are vital.

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STATE NATURE PRESERVES

The Commission manages 18 state nature preserves, which protects 5,812 acres and represents many of Kentucky's natural communities.

1 - Bad Branch

A 435-acre forested gorge on the south face of Pine Mountain in Letcher County that protects numerous rare species of plants and animals.

2 - Bat Cave

Within Carter Caves State Resort Park in Carter County, this 128-acre preserve protects a large population of the federally endangered Indiana Bat.

3 - Beargrass Creek

A 41-acre important green space and popular birding area near Joe Creason Park in Louisville.

4 - Blackacre

A 170-acre important environmental education center for Jefferson County students.

5 - Blue Licks

A 15-acre area within Blue Licks State Park in Robertson County containing Short's Goldenrod, a plant known from nowhere else in the world.

6 - Boone County Cliffs

The cliffs outcropping in this 46-acre forested tract were formed from glacial material deposited over 700,000 years ago.

7 - Brigadoon

A 92-acre mostly old-growth forest in Barren County with an uncommon variety of wildflowers.

8 - Cascade Caverns

An 18-acre area also within Carter Caves State Resort Park that protects the Mountain Maple and Canadian Yew, both rare in Kentucky.

9 - Cumberland Falls

A 1,294 acre preserve within Cumberland Falls State Resort Park in McCreary County that protects seven rare plants.

10 - Cypress Creek

Ninety-seven acres of bottomlands and wetlands adjacent to Cypress Creek in Muhlenberg County.

11 - Jesse Stuart

A gift-purchase from the late author, Jesse Stuart, of his 733-acre home place in Greenup County.

12 - Jim Scudder

A 58-acre limestone glade complex in Hardin County that protects several rare prairie plants.

13 - John James Audubon

A 325-acre portion of Audubon State Park in Henderson County originally set aside as a bird sanctuary and memorial to this distinguished naturalist.

14 - Metropolis Lake

A 50-acre McCracken County floodplain lake ringed with Bald Cypress and Swamp Tupelo and home to several rare organisms.

15 - Natural Bridge

A 994-acre preserve within Natural Bridge State Resort Park in Powell County that protects several rare species.

16 - Pilot Knob

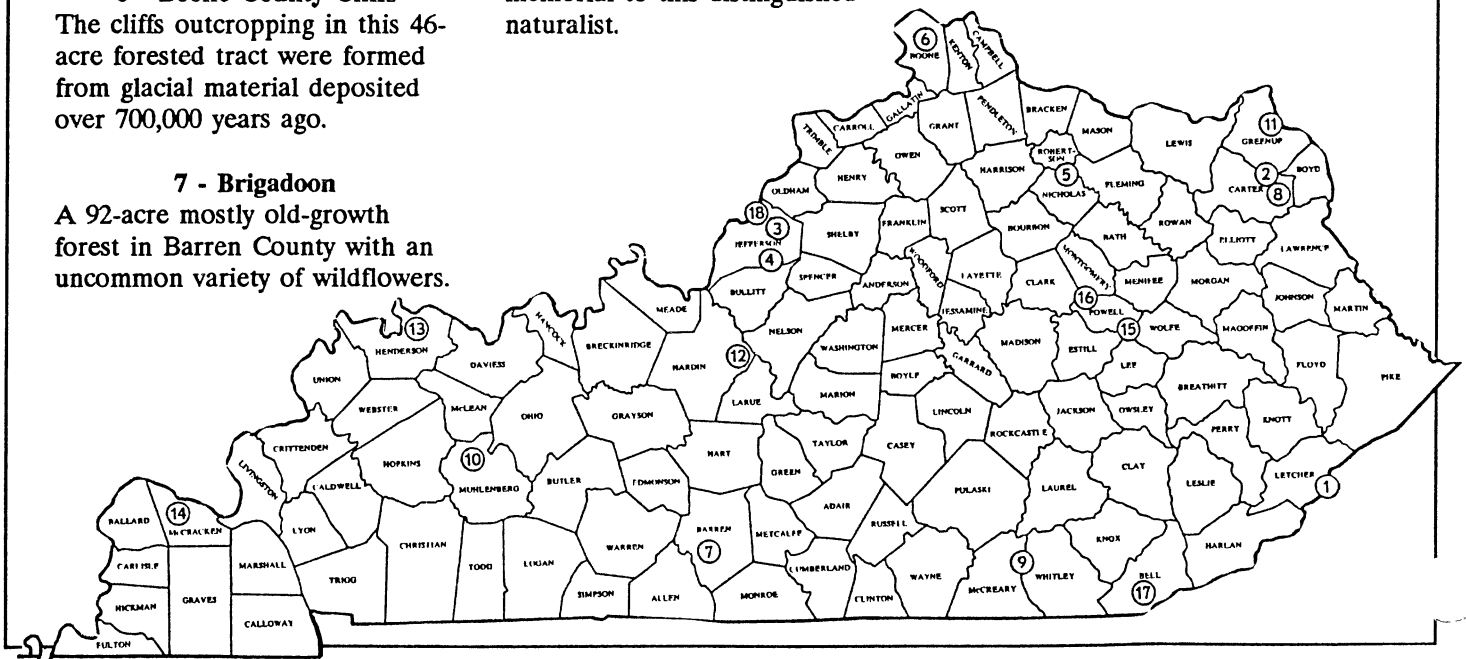
A 308-acre area with a 730-foot high knob in Powell County considered to be the prominence from which Daniel Boone looked out over the Bluegrass Region.

17 - Pine Mountain

A 868-acre preserve with old-growth forest and a significant geologic system within Pine Mountain State Resort Park in Bell County.

18 - Six Mile Island

An 81-acre island in the Ohio River near Louisville noted for its variety of waterfowl.



VOLUNTEERS

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This year, stewardship efforts at the Commission got several big boosts as volunteers answered the call for assistance. A cedar-clearing project at Jim Scudder State Nature Preserve was completed in February with the help of Boy Scout troops 668 and 829 from Elizabethtown. Two boys, David Zaehringer and Michael Jones, worked on this project as part of their Eagle Scout requirements. Special thanks go to the boys and the adults who accompanied them on both Saturdays.

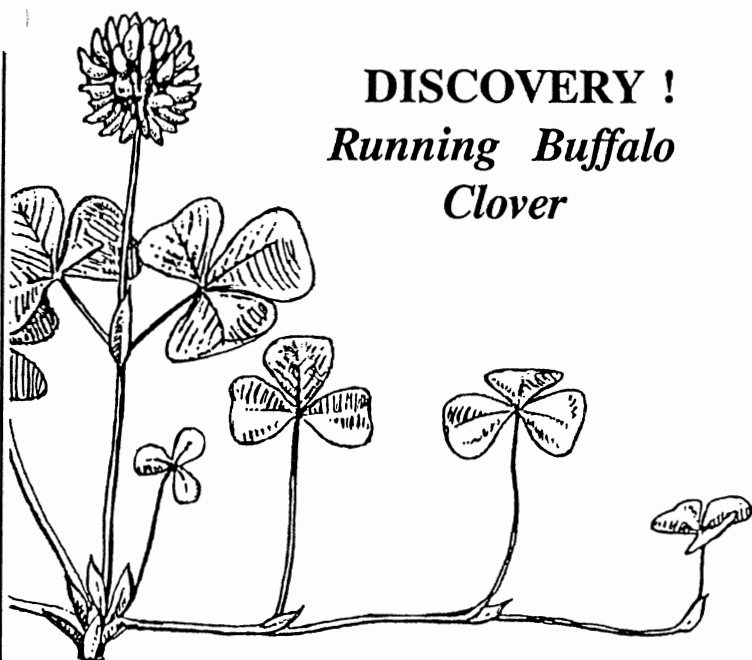
The trails at the Jesse Stuart State Nature Preserve in Greenup County were cleared of tangling honeysuckle vines by hard-working volunteers of the Highlands Group of the Cumberland Chapter of the Sierra Club. The Club also put up bluebird boxes and, with the assistance of the Department of Highways, cleaned up several old trash dumps on the property. Many

thanks for the tremendous amount of work accomplished and hours spent since the beginning of last summer, especially to two of the Club's tireless members, Mark Hamilton and Greg Wyer.

Crossing the swift, cold waters of Bad Branch has been made a little easier with the completion of two bridges at this preserve in Letcher County. The Commission would like to thank Dan Danford for mobilizing local volunteers and soliciting refreshment donations from Food World, Superior Market, and Pizza Hut. We thank these Whitesburg businesses for their generous support. Our thanks also to Steve Elsea at Kentucky Power in Whitesburg for donating the power poles for the bridge

supports, a generator, and the cable to anchor both bridges. Work was begun on the eroding main trail in the gorge, but additional volunteer labor is needed to complete these repairs. Those who are interested should contact Joyce at the Commission office in Frankfort.

Volunteer support is vital to the Commission in so many ways. Our small agency has the monumental responsibility of protecting rare and endangered species and their habitats throughout the Commonwealth. Without the assistance of volunteers, we would never be able to accomplish as much in such short amounts of time. The Commission welcomes volunteer help not only with stewardship projects but for other projects where a volunteer's talent may compliment or augment staff expertise.



DISCOVERY ! *Running Buffalo Clover*

In the spring of 1987, Marc Evans, Commission botanist, discovered a population of an old Kentucky native, Running Buffalo Clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*). Until 1983, scientists thought this native clover was extinct, since it had not been seen since around 1940. Then in 1983, the plant was

rediscovered in West Virginia. Botanists became excited by this rediscovery and started looking for it in the surrounding states. In 1987, it was found in Indiana, as well as in Kentucky. It was rediscovered in Ohio last year.

The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission received a grant in 1988 from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Endangered Species to search for more Kentucky populations of Running Buffalo Clover during May and June while the plant was in flower. Three new populations were discovered by Commission staff -- two in Fayette County, one by Tom Bloom, who has conducted an intensive inventory this year, and the other by Tom, Richard Clements, and Marc Evans. Joyce Bender found a small population in Bourbon County.

The species appears to prefer rich moist soil, partial sun, and infrequent disturbance such as light grazing or mowing. Many of the known populations are at historical sites, so the Kentucky search focused on old cemeteries, parks, historic homes and barns, and old homestead sites.

Running Buffalo Clover is believed to be more nutritious and more palatable than the common European white clover, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture is conducting research on its use as a new forage crop.

MEET THE COMMISSION BOARD

The Commission is directed by a five-member citizen board appointed by the Governor. The Kentucky Audubon Council, Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy, Kentucky Ornithological Society, and Kentucky Academy of Science provide recommendations for appointees.

The Commission members were newly appointed this summer. Two of these members are at-large; these are Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown of Louisville, who is the only member re-appointed and who was just elected chairman, and Hugh Archer of Frankfort, who was elected secretary. The other three members represent the farming community as follows: the National Farmers Organization -- Harold Duckworth of Cynthiana; Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation -- Randall Farris of Round Hill; and State Association of Soil Conservation Districts -- Kenneth Jackson of Harrodsburg.

DID YOU KNOW?

The unique forest of the Cumberland Plateau, known as the Mixed Mesophytic Forest, is the oldest forest community in eastern North America. Instead of being composed of just a few species, this forest has more different kinds of trees than any other forest type in the country. It contains many varieties of oaks, black and white walnuts, magnolia, tulip poplar, beech, ash, basswoods, birch, hemlock, hickories, chestnut, buckeye, black cherry, sassafras among others.

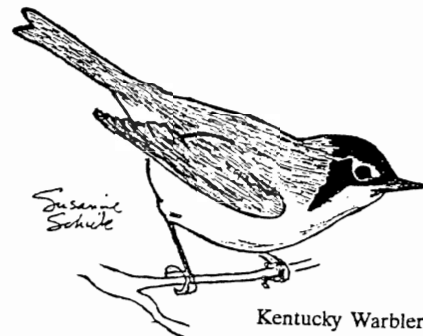
Kentucky State
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COMMISSIONERS

Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown, Chairman
Hugh Archer, Secretary
Harold Duckworth
Randall Farris
Kenneth Jackson

STAFF

Director - Richard Hannan
Stewardship Coordinator - Joyce Bender
Data Manager - Tom Bloom
Zoologist - Ronald Cicerello
Botanist - Marc Evans
Zoologist - Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.
Secretary - Melissa Shramm
Office Manager - Julie Smither



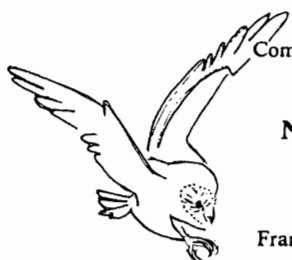
Kentucky Warbler

MEETING NOTICE

The next quarterly Commission meeting will be held on August 16, 1989 at 7:00 p.m. in the Multi-purpose Building at Cumberland Falls State Resort Park. A field trip is scheduled through Cumberland Falls State Nature Preserve on Eagle Falls Trail at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 17.

The last quarterly meeting of the year will be held on October 25 at Barren River Lake State Park. The public is invited to attend all Commission meetings. For more information, contact the Commission office.

Printed with State Funds



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Kentucky State
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Commission

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